

Dixie Drive I-15 Interchange Project – Social Analysis

Project Area Social and Demographic Conditions

The area surrounding the proposed project site is characterized by a mixture of commercial and residential land uses. A large portion of the area, bounded on the east by Hilton Drive and on the west by Black Ridge Drive, is entirely commercial in character, with land use dominated by several large automobile and recreational vehicle dealerships, a collision repair center, and hotel facilities. Two additional automobile dealerships as well as commercial office facilities and a convenience store are located in the area adjoining the intersection of Hilton Drive and Black Ridge Drive, and along the portion of Hilton Drive extending west from that intersection before Hilton Drive transitions into Dixie Drive. Residential neighborhoods located in proximity to the project area include a small subdivision (Heritage Village) located west of the intersection site between Dixie Drive and Indian Hills Drive, and an area of more extensive residential development encompassing including the Legacy and Southgate subdivisions located immediately south of Dixie Drive and the South Gate golf course.

Sustained population growth throughout Washington County and St. George since the time of the 2000 Census can make it difficult to assess current social and demographic conditions in local areas where substantial new residential development has occurred in recent years. However, on-site reconnaissance of the project area conducted in August, 2008, and a review of satellite imagery maps of the project area from 1999 and 2006 provided by the St. George planning and zoning department, suggest that residential areas located near the proposed intersection were in nearly all instances fully developed before 2000. Because of this, it is reasonable to assume that 2000 census data can still provide a fairly accurate approximation of the size and characteristics of the residential population located in areas immediately surrounding the project location.

Virtually all areas of residential development located near to the project site are encompassed by Block Group 2 in Census Tract 2715. In 2000, this census subdivision contained 935 residents. The population of this localized area was overwhelmingly white (4.9% of residents were classified as non-white) and non-Hispanic (1.3% were Hispanic). Slightly over one-third (34.9%) of the population was comprised of persons age 65 or older, consistent with retirement-based growth trends that have affected the entire St. George metropolitan area in recent years. At the time of the 2000 census, a relatively low 5.5% of residents within this block group area were classified as living in households with income levels below the federally-designated poverty level.

More localized population information can be derived from data reported for smaller census block areas. The Heritage Village area north of Dixie Drive and the Legacy/Southgate area south of Dixie Drive are localized areas of particular interest, due to their proximity to the project site and the potential for residents to experience some disturbance effects as a result of construction activities and traffic changes. The area that includes and immediately surrounds the Heritage Village subdivision is encompassed primarily by Block 2016, along with adjoining areas in Block 2003 and Block 2017 within Census Tract 2715. The area encompassing the

Legacy/Southgate areas is comprised of Blocks 2014, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043 and 2044, also within Census Tract 2715. Population characteristics for these two areas of residential development are summarized in Table 1. As these data indicate, only a small number of people live in the area directly north of Dixie Drive that includes the Heritage Village subdivision. The residential population of areas located south of Dixie Drive and the Southgate Golf Course is considerably larger. Both areas are comprised of populations that are overwhelmingly white and non-Hispanic. At the time of the 2000 census the percentage of residents age 65 or older was considerably higher (43.7%) in the Legacy/Southgate area than in the Heritage Village (21.7%) area.

Potential Project Effects on Social Conditions

Construction activities that are proposed to occur in conjunction with the Dixie Drive interchange project are not expected to require removal of any existing residences, or to create proximity impacts on residential properties. As a result, the project will not generate relocation impacts for local area residents, nor will it result in changes to the social composition or levels of social interaction and cohesion currently present in neighborhoods located near to the project site. People who live in areas proximate to the project area will undoubtedly experience temporary inconveniences, including traffic delays and detours and increased levels of noise and dust, as a consequence of project construction activities. However, the long-term enhancement of traffic flows, improved access to and from I-15, and reduced levels of traffic congestion resulting from project implementation should create more satisfactory driving conditions for residents of the local project area as well as for people living throughout the St. George urbanized area. Taken as a whole, the project is not expected to generate significant adverse social impacts for local area populations, and there is no evidence that any adverse impacts could fall disproportionately on environmental justice populations.

Table 1. Selected socio-demographic characteristics of residents living in portions of Census Tract 2715 located in proximity to the Dixie Drive interchange project area (based on 2000 Census data).

	<u>Heritage Village area¹</u>	<u>Legacy/Southgate area²</u>
No. of residents	23	502
Pct. non-white	4.3%	2.8%
Pct. Hispanic	4.3%	0.4%
Pct. 65 or older	21.7%	42.4%

¹ This area is comprised of Census Blocks 2003, 2016 and 2017

² This area is comprised of Census Blocks 2014, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, and 2044.